

House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

Ethics and Campaign Finance Reform



By State Representative Bill Aman

Our state is trying to recover from a series of ethical breaches by numerous public officials, culminating with the resignation of former Governor John Rowland. On January 10th, Governor M. Jodi Rell delivered sweeping reform proposals aimed at improving Connecticut's ethics and corruption laws.

I support Governor Rell's call for banning campaign contributions from lobbyists and political action committees as well as from state contractors. These actions will empower the Ethics Commission to hold businesses and individuals accountable, and will close loopholes in the gift statutes. Money should not be able to buy influence at the Capitol.

I do not agree, however, with those who say that the State should fund politicians' campaigns. With the state facing a \$1.3 billion budget deficit, largely caused by reliance on one-time gimmicks to balance the previous budget, I think it is highly inappropriate to ask state taxpayers to give me \$20,000 to run my next campaign. Individual small contributions should be the backbone of any political race.

While attempts will be made to fast track new ethics legislation, a package will not emerge from the General Assembly very quickly, since the new ethics rules may need to go before as many as five different committees for public hearings and review. These committees will need to spend considerable time analyzing the new laws in order to be sure they will be hard to circumvent.

As I said before, I support passage of Governor Rell's reforms. New ethics laws certainly must be enacted, and it is important that the legislature make every effort to be thorough and accurate in doing so. No matter what law is passed, I will continue to live by the principle, "if it would embarrass my mother, don't do it!"

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please call me at home (528-3564), e-mail me (bill.aman@cga.ct.gov), stop and see me during my monthly office hours at the library, or speak up when I see you at the Community Center or around town.

Bill